

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

God, but also to see herself punished and chastised. She began, therefore, to have the greatest displeasure from those things in which she at first delighted, and a great delight in what at first displeased her."

" She also said that self-love is the cause of every evil and the ruin of every good, and that it is of two kinds, to wit, sensitive self-love and spiritual self-love. The first is the cause of all sensual sins, and of all others that are open and manifest, and are committed through affection for earthly things and creatures ; that is, when, for love of them, the commandments of the Creator are scorned and disobeyed. The second self-love, called spiritual, is that which, after despising earthly things, all creatures, and even his own senses, nevertheless makes man keep so tenaciously attached to his own spiritual appetite and to his own opinion, that he will not serve God nor walk in His ways unless in accordance with his own desire and feeling. Therefore, since God wants man without a will of his own, such a one cannot possibly stand firm nor persevere in his way ; needs must he fall, because he adheres more to his own will than to the divine. Such are all those who would fain choose state and exercise according to their own liking, and not according as they are called by God and judged by the counsel of prudent and discreet persons. Such also are those who are too much wedded to some spiritual work or exercise, such as fasting or the like, as though it were an end in itself; for it then happens that, if they cannot practise it, they at once yield to despair and abandon everything. Among these should also be included those who love spiritual consolations and sweetnesses too much, and, when these fail them, soon despair. True spiritual love loves God alone and the salvation of the soul for God's sake. It makes use of all other things in due order for this end, and reckons not what the means may be, provided that the end is the honour of God and the salvation of our neighbours. Whoso, then, possesses true spiritual love must judge and take all things according to the will of God, and not according to that of men ; and when he remains deprived of any spiritual consolation, he must at once think and